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A Message From the Director



We are entering the final count-down period for the major expansion of health insurance under the federal ACA health reform legislation. On October 1, 2013, California's health benefit exchange (called Covered California) will open enrollment. Individuals who make \$45,960 or less and families of four that make \$94,200 or less may qualify for a subsidy to help pay for health care coverage under Covered California. Coverage would be effective on or after January 1, 2014.

October 1, 2013 also marks the end to doing redeterminations for Healthy Way LA (HWLA) enrollees. That means that any HWLA enrollee that was due to have their eligibility re-determined for continued enrollment during the last 3 months of the year can stay in the program without completing extra paperwork.

On January 1, 2014 our HWLA enrollees will move into Medicaid. We are closing in on our goal of enrolling 300,000 persons into HWLA by the end of the year - we'd already enrolled 272,000 by mid-September. Meanwhile, we have developed an extensive education campaign to alert our patients about how they can stay with us after they gain Medicaid coverage.

Equally important, we continue to improve our delivery system so that we will be the system of choice for persons who gain health insurance. One great example is the opening of the new Ambulatory Procedure Unit at Hudson Comprehensive Health Center (see page 2). In the past we have had long backlogs in scheduling procedures such as colonoscopies. This new unit will enable us to efficiently increase the number of procedures we perform and reduce wait times. The new Ambulatory Procedure Unit is just one of the many ways we continue to transform our care.

I am so proud of all the positive changes I see in our delivery system. Thank you for making DHS a system of choice.



Healthy Way L.A. Transition Underway

By Michael Wilson

An estimated 300,000 Healthy Way L.A. (HWLA) members will transition to Medi-Cal on January 1 as program leaders prepare for the first wave of health reform to hit Los Angeles County. The program ends December 31.

The County will send notification letters on behalf of the State to HWLA members later this month alerting them to the coverage shift. Members will then receive a Medi-Cal health plan enrollment packet from the state in November and Medi-Cal welcome packets in December.

"The number of patients who will transition is daunting but we are ready," says HWLA program head Shari Doi Hatcher, who heads a transition steering committee overseeing planning efforts. "Each DHS facility has identified a lead for the transition, a designated location for HWLA members who have questions, and a plan for after hours. We want to minimize confusion or have any gap in service." Over the past six weeks, the transition team has conducted nearly 100 training sessions at all DHS sites and online to educate front line workers and executive-level staff about the HWLA transition and new coverage options available to patients.

Under changes enacted by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), all current HWLA members will shift to Medi-Cal Managed Care coverage. This means patients can select between two health plans (LA Care and Health Net) and different provider networks in those plans. Patients with DHS medical homes will be assigned back to DHS if they don't choose a different provider. In most

cases, their health plan will be LA Care.

"Patients will have choice and we want our patients to choose DHS and to continue receiving services in our system," says DHS Managed Care Services director Tangerine Brigham.

"Our goal is to have little attrition in the number of patients we serve. Over the last two years, DHS has initiated a number of efforts to improve patient experience and quality of care across our health care delivery system. These efforts will pay off and we'll see it when patients select DHS as their provider once they have health insurance."

Brigham heads the new DHS Managed Care Services division, which will work closely with the two health plans on quality, timely provision of care, grievances, and other administrative functions related to caring for covered lives in the DHS system.

The HWLA transition team is getting some help from an outside agency to help develop multilingual posters and pocket guides, and help refine messaging and communication strategies. Program leaders say a big challenge has been coordinating efforts with the State to ensure that their plans, timelines, and messages work for DHS patients.

Healthy Way L.A. has seen tremendous enrollment increases over the past two years. Outreach is being coordinated to an additional 30,000 home health workers who are eligible for the program, as well as former HWLA patients who may be eligible to re-enroll in the program. Program enrollment will continue through December 31, 2013.

Polk Appointed to County's Top Health Post

By Michael Wilson

DHS administrative deputy Gregory Polk has been appointed to the position of senior assistant, chief executive officer to oversee the County's Health and Mental Health cluster, which includes the departments of Health Services, Mental Health, and Public Health.

In his new role, Polk will evaluate departmental budgets and operational activities, and direct and evaluate County-wide operations and client-based services. He will also develop finance, budget and policy recommendations, and reports to the Board of Supervisors.

"Careers take unexpected turns and I'm looking forward to this new challenge," said Polk. "I plan to focus on better integrating health services across departments in preparation for health reform and continuing the

(See 'Polk' on back)

Manikins Aid Clinical Training

By Grace Ibanez, RN

With generous grant funding from LA Care Health Plan, the DHS Office of Nursing Affairs has purchased four simulated manikins and several training modules for the College of Nursing and Allied Health, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Hospital and Olive View-UCLA Medical Center to enhance clinical training. The simulated (electronic) manikins demonstrate the latest innovation in technology with human-like attributes. They can speak and blink eyes, and have simulated breath and heart sounds and body pulses. They will be used as a training tool to increase nursing skills, enhance patient/nurse interactions, and increase overall critical thinking skills. The manikins can be used for intubation and chest tube insertions, and hold man-made body fluids such as blood and urine for procedures like urinary catheterizations and hemorrhage. The training module allows the operator to create multiple training scenarios for a nurse during clinical testing and for specific simulated patient care situations.



In May, Olive View-UCLA Medical Center hosted the initial manikin training session for Senior Nursing Instructors, Nurse Instructors and Directors. Training was facilitated by CAE Healthcare, a medical simulation company with a mission to improve healthcare education and patient safety. The Office of Nursing Affairs would like to acknowledge LA Care Health Plan for its contribution and investment in DHS clinical education and looks forward to a continued and long lasting partnership.

DHS Data Hub Takes Shape

By Michael Wilson

The nondescript cement building tucked away on the MLK campus looks like a supply warehouse. There are no signs, no marquees, and no windows. But once you pass through layers of high tech security and enter the sacred second floor, you realize this is a storage unit of a different kind: the brain center that will soon drive the software that powers the nation's second largest health system. Whether you use Affinity, Quadramed, or any of the complex pharmacy or allied health applications in DHS, its functionality likely resides in one of the servers stacked in rows here that resemble DVD players. The new 6,000 square site is called the Interim Data Hub and is the fruition of several years of planning between the DHS and the Chief Executive Office on how to prepare for a new era of data storage. Down the road, the County intends to build a new data center in Downey that will house applications for all County departments under one roof. But for the near future, the MLK data center will house a big chunk of DHS and DMH applications and support critical data sharing with Cerner, the enterprise electronic medical record vendor that will host the record system from its Midwest headquarters. For the uninitiated, the icy cold room housing rows of metal racks doesn't look like much. But for information technology professionals, it's a mother lode of opportunity to reshape the way the department has historically run applications and the way technology is deployed across the health system. DHS chief information officer Kevin Lynch says DHS currently has six separate data centers, but the goal is to consolidate all of those into two



hubs: one at MLK and another at LAC+USC Medical Center. The two hubs, which both run from separate energy sources and have generator back-up, provide essential redundancy in case of a total energy failure or disaster at one or the other location. Lynch is most excited by the prospect of building a "virtual" enterprise environment, which would allow multiple—even hundreds—of applications to run on a single server. While easier said than done, it's a rapidly developing new frontier that would significantly cut vendor costs and support a more efficient operation. There are about 250 applications in use now across DHS. While not every IT professional in DHS may be happy with consolidated information storage in a single location, careful design of the new hub ensures 24/7 secured remote access and monitoring for DHS facilities that may need to reboot a server. Is Lynch concerned about security breaches or break-in at the new center? Not really. Multiple cameras monitor the premises. The MLK Sheriff's station will also be housed on the building's bottom floor.



Hudson Clinic Expands Colonoscopy Service



Last month the H. Claude Hudson Comprehensive Health Center (CHC) welcomed guests from LA Care, One LA, DHS and other County officials at an Open House to celebrate its new Ambulatory Procedure Unit (APU). Clinic leaders envision the unit evolving into a Center of Excellence that provides improved access for diagnostic and treatment procedures, primarily for Patient-Centered Medical Home empaneled patients. "I am pleased that Hudson CHC is able to increase the overall capacity for colonoscopy services within DHS," said Ambulatory Care Network Chief Medical Officer Dr. Nina Park. "We have a program that has been designed to be streamlined, highly efficient, and cost effective. We're confident that many patients will be able to undergo the needed diagnostic colonoscopies in a timely fashion." Hudson Clinic was provided funding through an LA Care grant to increase access to colonoscopy services. Currently, the APU has the capacity to perform 9-12 colonoscopies a day, twice a week. These procedures will be scheduled based on the recommendation of an eConsult specialty reviewer.



(‘Polk’)

important work of the health care taskforce to streamline hiring and other administrative functions. It has been a joy working for Dr. Katz and with the DHS executive team and that great relationship will continue." "The size and complexity of DHS has presented a constant stream of issues for Greg to manage, which he has done with great acumen," said DHS director Dr. Mitchell Katz. "Greg will continue to be very involved in our transformation work and I look forward to working with him in his new capacity." During his four years at DHS, Polk oversaw major internal units including Human Resources, Contracts and Grants, Audit and Compliance, Supply Chain Management, Finance, Information Technology, Facilities Management, and the Office of Diversity Programs. Prior to joining Health Services, he spent 14 years in the County's Chief Executive Office directing budget planning, capital projects, and administrative functions for several County departments. He began his County management career in the Office of the Alternate Defense Counsel, now known as the Office of the Alternate Public Defender.